

# PUTNAM'S MAGAZINE

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## RECOLLECTIONS OF LINCOLN

By JAMES GRANT WILSON



Y first talk, face to face with this most extraordinary man was in the autumn of 1858, when he was in the midst of his celebrated

debating contest in Illinois with Senator Douglas. I was introduced to him by Judge Treat, one of my father's friends. We found him in a shabby little uncarpeted law office over a grocer's shop in Springfield. He was of unusual height, six feet four, being three inches taller than Washington and nearly nine inches taller than Grant. His face was rugged and swarthy, with coarse, rebellious dark hair; his arms and legs seemed to me the longest I had ever seen. His hands and feet were huge but well shaped, and his grayish-brown eyes were perhaps the saddest I ever saw. However, when a good story was told, whether by himself or another, his homely face lighted up till he was positively handsome.

Many things that were said during that hour's interview still linger in my memory. I ventured to inquire

from what part of the country his ancestors came, and Mr. Lincoln answered: "Well, my young friend, I believe the first of our ancestors we know anything about was Samuel Lincoln, who came from Norwich, England, in 1638, and settled in a small Massachusetts place called Hingham, or it might have been Hanghim—which was it, Judge?"

Something was said about the wildcat Western currency of seventy years ago, a species of paper money then worth about as much as Confederate bills were worth after Lee's surrender at Appomattox. (At the latter time a parcel containing over a thousand dollars was offered to me in Mobile by a Southerner, who said he would be glad to accept a five-dollar greenback in exchange for it, which he did.) Mr. Lincoln's story was that he was going down the Mississippi. Fuel was getting low, and the captain directed the pilot to steer in to the first woodpile he saw on the river bank. When the steamer reached one, the captain said to the owner on shore, "Is that your wood?" "Certainly." "Do you want to sell it?" "Yes." "Will you ac-



cept wildcat currency?" "Certainly." "How will you take it?" said the captain; to which the owner promptly replied: "Cord for cord!"

Judge Treat mentioned to Mr. Lincoln that he had heard some interesting stories of Washington recently related to me at Arlington by Mr. Custis, the General's adopted son, who lived with him at Mount Vernon for eighteen years—among other facts, that Washington was perhaps the strongest man of his day and generation, and that in his youth he was a famous wrestler, never having been thrown. Said Mr. Lincoln: "It is rather a curious thing, my young friend, but that is exactly my record. I could outlift any man in Southern Illinois when I was young, and I never was thrown. There was a big fellow named Jack Armstrong, strong as a Russian bear, that I could not put down; nor could he get me on the ground. If George was loafing around here now, I should be glad to have a tussle with him, and I rather believe that one of the plain people of Illinois would be able to manage the aristocrat of old Virginia." Mr. Lincoln was very fond of being known as one of the plain people. I frequently heard him use the expression. On one occasion he said: "I think the Lord must love the plain people, he has made so many of them."

Another droll story that still lingers in my memory was of Lincoln attending a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Illinois Lunatic Asylum near Springfield. The long hall being rather chilly, he thought it would be well to wear his hat. As he passed along, a little lunatic darted out from a door and confronting him exclaimed: "Sir, I am amazed that you should presume to wear your hat in the presence of Christopher Columbus!" "I beg your pardon, Mr. Columbus," replied Mr. Lincoln, removing his hat and proceeding to the meeting. Returning half an hour later, having forgotten the incident, and wearing his hat as before, he was again accosted by the little man, who, drawing him-

self up, said in severe tones: "Sir, I am astounded that you should dare to wear your hat in the presence of General Washington!" "Pray excuse me, General," and Mr. Lincoln took off his high hat, "but it seems to me that less than an hour ago you said you were Christopher Columbus." "Oh yes, that is quite correct; but that was by another mother!"

Three days after my first interview with Mr. Lincoln, I was invited to dine with Stephen A. Douglas in Chicago, the only other guest being Governor Aiken of South Carolina. There was some conversation about Lincoln, and the Senator told the story of the Lincoln-Shields duel, his version differing widely from the usually accepted account. Certain articles had appeared in the Springfield paper, he said, reflecting on James Shields, at that time a schoolmaster. According to the Senator, Lincoln, Shields and himself were rival candidates for the hand of Mary Todd. After the campaign had been carried on for several months, it was announced that Abe Lincoln was the accepted suitor. But Shields persisted in paying attention to the young lady, much to her annoyance as well as to Lincoln's.

Finally an unsigned paragraph appeared in the Springfield journal, written by Miss Todd, purporting to be an old lady's advice to a granddaughter, warning her, among many other things, against allowing her hand to be held unduly long by Irish schoolmasters. The allusion was instantly recognized in the little community of fifteen hundred, and Shields threatened to chastise the editor unless he revealed the writer's name. The editor said he would not divulge it without the author's consent. "If you will return in fifteen minutes, I will give you an answer." Shields departed, and the editor ran around to Lincoln's office and stated what had occurred, saying: "Abe, what shall I do?" "Tell Shields I wrote it," Lincoln replied. Promptly came a challenge, which was as promptly accepted. Lincoln chose cavalry swords for weapons, and Bloody

Island in the Mississippi was selected as the scene of the duel. The day was clear and cold, and while the seconds were arranging the preliminaries Lincoln, to warm himself, began mowing the grass. When Shields, said Douglas, saw the giant figure swinging a long sword like a scythe, he leaned against a huge elm, and fainted with fright! And so ended the bloodless duel.

During the years 1859-60 I frequently met Mr. Lincoln when his legal engagements called him to Chicago, where I was publishing and editing a literary journal called the *Record*, with an office in Portland Block. On the sixth story of the large Dearborn Street building, the sculptor, Leonard W. Volk, had his studio. I happened to meet Mr. Lincoln on the stairway, about the middle of April, 1860, and he informed me that he was giving sittings to Mr. Volk for a portrait bust; when he came down he would stop and see my sanctum. He did so, and as he looked around at the large, carpeted room, with its well-filled book-case, some attractive pictures, and busts of Shakespeare and Burns, he said: "Well, I never saw an editorial office like this before. It don't seem to resemble my Springfield law shop that you saw two winters ago." He

was particularly interested in the busts on learning that I had brought them from Stratford and Ayr respectively, saying: "They are my two favorite authors, and I must manage to see their birthplaces some day, if I can contrive to cross the Atlantic." By appointment, Mr. Lincoln stopped the following morning at my office for me to accompany him, and we went up the four pair of stairs together in a trial of speed. His long legs took him three steps at a stride; but I was quicker with my shorter stride of two steps, so we arrived at the goal neck and neck, to the intense amusement of the astonished sculptor who awaited us at the head of the stairs.

The previous day Volk had made a plaster cast of Lincoln's face (now in the National Museum at Washington, together with the casts of his hands which he made later), to aid him in making his well-known bust. During the hour that Lincoln remained in the studio, he poured out an almost unceasing stream of drolleries, while Volk was modelling the clay. My recollection is that Lincoln gave the sculptor six or more sittings of from one to several hours in duration. The original plaster bust is now in the possession of the sculptor's only son, Douglas Volk, a well-known painter, whose present home is in

*Original Manuscript of  
second Inaugural presented  
to Major John Hay.*

*Abraham Lincoln*

*April 10. 1865*

4/2/94  
Yellow Anniversary

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At this second appearing to take the oath of the presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued, seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention, and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it— all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in

the city seeking to destroy it without war-seeking to dissolve the Union, and divide effects, by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came.

One eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the Southern <sup>part</sup> ~~half~~ of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war; while the government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it. Neither party expected for the war, the magnitude, or the duration, which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that



the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" If we shall suppose that American Slavery is one of those offences which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South, this terrible war, as the woe due to those



by whom the offence came, shall we discern there-  
in any departure from those divine attributes  
which the believers in a living God always  
ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope— fervent-  
ly do we pray— that this mighty scourge of  
war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God  
wills that it continue, until all the wealth  
piled by the bond-man's two hundred and  
fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk,  
and until every drop <sup>of</sup> blood drawn with the  
lash, shall be paid by another drawn with  
the sword, as was said three thousand years  
ago, so still it must be said "the judgments  
of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether"

With malice toward none;  
with charity for all; with firmness in the  
right, as God gives us to see the right,  
let us strive on to finish the work we  
are in; to bind up the nation's wounds;  
to care for him who shall <sup>have</sup> borne the bat-  
tle, and for his widow, and his orphan—  
to do all which may achieve and cherish a just  
and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with <sup>all nations</sup> ~~the world~~.

Maine, while the original marble bust was destroyed in the Chicago Historical Society building during the great fire of 1871. Volk's life-size statues of Douglas and Lincoln are in the Illinois State House at Springfield.

A few months before Lincoln's nomination, which I witnessed in the immense Chicago "Wigwam," hearing, among others, the inspiring speech of George William Curtis, I visited the venerable James K. Paulding, the friend and literary partner of Washington Irving, at his residence near Hyde Park on the Hudson. The author of "The Dutchman's Fireside," who was Secretary of the Navy in Van Buren's administration and of course a good Democrat, expressed great interest in Lincoln, having read all the speeches made by him in his debate with Douglas, which I had sent him. He then surprised me by saying that in the summer of 1842, after Mr. Van Buren had completed his term as President, they made a tour to the West, proceeding as far as Illinois, and spending a day or two in Chicago, then a small and unattractive town. Later, when on their way to Springfield, they were delayed by impassable roads and compelled to spend the night at Rochester, several miles from the capital. Some of the ex-President's Springfield friends, knowing the wretched accommodations of the place, came there bringing bottles and other refreshments to entertain the party at the country inn. "The Democrats," said Mr. Paulding, "also brought with them your Whig friend, Lincoln, to aid in entertaining the New Yorkers. Thanks to his anecdotes and descriptions of Western life, together with other witty stories, we passed a joyous evening in the little prairie tavern. If the tall Illinoisian receives the nomination for President, as you think very possible, I believe I shall be tempted to vote for him." During Mr. Lincoln's first administration, I inquired if he remembered meeting Van Buren and Paulding,

and he replied that he had very agreeable recollections of the delightful evening spent at Rochester with the two distinguished Democrats. The President was much interested in my stating that Paulding contemplated voting for him, but that before the nomination he had followed his friend Irving, as if he had only waited to gather up and carry to him the grateful homage of their common country. Irving died in November, 1859; Paulding in April, 1860.

Soon after Lincoln's election, he held a reception in the principal hotel of Chicago. For several hours a continuous procession of his friends and admirers passed before him, many of them old and intimate acquaintances. It was amusing to observe Lincoln's unfeigned enjoyment, and to hear his hearty greetings in answer to familiar friends who exclaimed, "How are you, Abe?" he responding in like manner with "Hello, Bill!" or "Jack," or "Tom," alternately pulling or pushing them along with his powerful hand and arm, saying: "There's no time to talk now, boys; we must not stop this big procession; so move on."

More than two years later, General Grant gave me leave of absence to go to Washington to visit a younger brother who, having been mortally wounded in the battle of Fredericksburg, had been removed to the Georgetown hospital. After seeing my brother I called at the White House, and the President said: "How are affairs progressing with the Western armies? and what brings you to Washington?" When informed, he remarked: "If you will come in this afternoon at four o'clock, we will walk over to Georgetown and see the young captain."

On arriving at the White House, I found a Congressman in earnest conversation with the President. Looking at me as if I were an intruder, the politician stopped and Mr. Lincoln said: "It is all right—we are going out together; so turn on your

Executive Mansion,

Washington, March 15 1865

Charles Weed, Esq

My dear Sir,

Every one likes a compliment, thank you for yours on my little notification speech, and on the recent Inaugural Address. I expect the latter to wear as well as — perhaps better than — anything I have produced; but I believe it is not immediately popular. Men are not flattered by being shown that there has been a difference of opinion between the Almighty and them. To deny it, however, in this case, is to deny that there is a God governing the world. It is a point which I thought needful to be taken; and, as whatever of humiliation there is in it, falls more directly on <sup>myself</sup> ~~me~~, I thought others might offer for me to take it.

Yours truly  
A. Lincoln.

oratory." So the member resumed, talking vigorously for five minutes or more, in behalf of his constituent, an applicant for some office. The President, looking critically on the right side of his face and then on the left, remarked, in an interested manner: "Why, John, how close you do shave." That was the way in which he baffled the office-seekers; and although the Congressman was disappointed, of course, he could not avoid laughing. After his departure I said, "Mr. President, is that the way you manage the politicians?" and he answered: "Well, Colonel, you must not sup-

pose you have all the strategy in the army."

When we arrived at the hospital, Mr. Lincoln saw, or thought he saw, a strong resemblance between my brother and his favorite son Willie, who had recently died. This interested him so deeply that the following afternoon Mrs. Lincoln drove out with us, and she too saw the likeness. During the fortnight that my brother survived, the President visited him several times, and Mrs. Lincoln sent the young soldier little delicacies made by herself. This incident is introduced chiefly to illustrate the fact that the President



was one of the tenderest-hearted of men.

One day the President and the Secretary of State, accompanied by a young staff-officer, attended a review near Arlington on the opposite side of the Potomac. An ambulance drawn by four mules was provided. When the party arrived on the Virginia side of the river, where the roads were rough and badly cut by artillery and army trains, the driver had so much difficulty with the team, in his efforts to prevent the wheels dropping into the ruts, that he lost his temper and began to swear; the worse the roads became, the greater became his profanity. At last the President said, in his pleasant manner: "Driver, my friend, are you an Episcopalian?" Greatly astonished, the man made answer: "No, Mr. President, I ain't much of anything; but if I go to church at all, I go to the Methodist Church." "Oh, excuse me," replied Lincoln, with a smile, and a twinkle in his eye; "I thought you must be an Episcopalian, for you swear just like Secretary Seward, and he's a church-warden!"

Two years passed, and I was again in Washington, remaining on duty there for more than three months. Late one evening when I dined with the President, the Secretary of State and Mr. E. B. Washburne, member of Congress from Galena, Illinois, were announced. Mr. Seward said they desired to show the large gold medal, just received from the Philadelphia Mint, which was voted by Congress to General Grant for the capture of Vicksburg. Mr. Lincoln, approaching a small centre-table on which there was a drop-light, opened the morocco case containing the medal upside down.

After a long pause, the writer ventured to remark, "What is the obverse of the medal, Mr. President?" He looked up, and turning to Mr. Seward, said, "I suppose by his obverse the Colonel means t'other side!" There was no sting in this, and the victim joined in the general laugh. Indeed,

Lincoln was too kind-hearted to exercise his trenchant power of reparation. "Wit laughs at everybody," he said; "humor laughs *with* everybody." The President's jocoseness was partly natural, partly intentional. In the sea of troubles that almost overwhelmed him, he affected a serenity that he was far from feeling, and his fun and mirth at momentous epochs were censured by dullards who could not comprehend their philosophy.

The following anecdotes and incidents belong to January and February, 1865. "A frontiersman," said Mr. Lincoln, "lost his way in an uninhabited region on a dark and tempestuous night. The rain fell in torrents, accompanied by terrible thunder and more terrific lightning. To increase his trouble his horse halted, being exhausted with fatigue and fright. Presently a bolt of lightning struck a neighboring tree, and the crash brought the man to his knees. He was not an expert in prayer, but his appeal was short and to the point: 'Oh, good Lord, if it is all the same to you, give us a little more light, and a little less noise!'"

Something led Mr. Lincoln one evening to mention the fact that David Tod, the war Governor of Ohio, who declined his invitation to succeed Chase as Secretary of the Treasury, had occasion to visit Washington in 1863, on government business. During an interview the President remarked: "You are perhaps aware, Governor, that my wife is a member of the Todd family of Kentucky, and they all spell their name with two *d*'s. How is it that you use but one?" "Mr. President, God spells his name with one *d*, and one is enough for the Governor of Ohio."

I called at the White House once with Isaac N. Arnold, a member of Congress from Chicago, who afterwards wrote an admirable biography of Lincoln. In the course of conversation the President expressed his admiration for Dr. Holmes's poem "The Last Leaf," and said that his



favorite hymns were Toplady's "Rock of Ages," and the one beginning:

Father, whate'er of  
earthly bliss  
Thy sovereign will  
denies.

His favorite poem, he said, was one entitled "Mortality," the author of which he had failed to discover, although he had tried to do so for twenty years. I was pleased to be able to inform him that it was written by William Knox, a young Scottish poet who died in 1825. He was greatly interested, and was still more gratified by the receipt, not long afterwards, of a collection of Knox's Poems, containing his favorite, which had appeared in hundreds of news-

papers throughout the country, and had been frequently attributed to him. A few days later I received a characteristic note of thanks for the volume. This much-prized letter was abstracted by some Lincoln admirer, a score of years ago, from a large autograph book containing my most precious literary treasures.

Another evening the President told a few intimate friends of an unknown person applying to the Secretary of State for a foreign mission, preferably to France. Mr. Seward informed his visitor that the position was not vacant. "Well how about Berlin?" That post also was held by an estimable gentleman. "Can you make me Consul to Liverpool?" "No, for the place is satisfactorily filled." "Perhaps you can appoint me to a clerkship in the State Department." Upon being informed by the

William H. Seward  
W. P. A. Seward  
William H. Seward  
William H. Seward  
Edw. Bates

W. H. Seward  
W. H. Seward

August 23. 1864.

SIGNATURES OF MEMBERS OF THE CABINET, DATED BY MR. LINCOLN

Secretary that he was sorry there was no vacancy, the obscure individual in the threadbare coat said: "Well, then, will you lend me five dollars?"

The day before the President left Washington for Gettysburg, he prepared a brief address on two sheets of White House paper, to be delivered after Edward Everett's oration. On the morning of the nineteenth of November, 1863, at Gettysburg, he wrote with a pencil the concluding portion of the address, which was substituted for the second sheet of the Washington draft written two days previous; and this is what has been frequently reproduced as the original. According to the testimony received from his private secretaries, Nicolay and Hay, who were present, Mr. Lincoln did not use the manuscript in delivering his immortal ad-

Four score and seven years ago our fathers  
brought forth, upon this continent, a new nation, con-  
secrated in liberty and dedicated to the proposition  
that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testi-  
fying whether that nation, or any nation, so conceived,  
and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met  
here on a great battle-field of that war. We ~~and~~ <sup>have</sup>  
~~come~~ <sup>come</sup> to dedicate a portion of it as <sup>a</sup> ~~the~~ final rest-  
ing place <sup>for</sup> of those who here gave their lives, that  
that nation might live. It is altogether fitting  
and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense we can not dedicate—  
we can not consecrate—we can not hallow this  
ground. The brave men, living and dead, who along  
with you, have consecrated it far above our <sup>poor</sup> power  
to add or detract. The world will little note,  
nor long remember, what we say here, but  
can never forget what they did here. It is  
for us, the living, rather to be dedicated  
here to the unfinished <sup>work</sup>, which they have,  
thus far, so nobly carried on. It is rather

for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before<sup>us</sup>—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to ~~the~~<sup>that</sup> cause for which they here gave ~~gave~~ the last full measure of devotion— that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation shall have a new birth of freedom; and that this government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

FACSIMILE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S FIRST AUTOGRAPH COPY OF THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS *as actually delivered*, MADE FOR JOHN HAY ON THE PRESIDENT'S RETURN FROM THE DEDICATORY EXERCISES, AND NOW FIRST PHOTOGRAPHED AND ENGRAVED FOR PUTNAM'S MONTHLY

dress, but departed from it in several particulars. On his return to Washington, at the request of Major Hay the President wrote down what he had actually said. This precious document is really the genuine original of the Gettysburg address as delivered; for the copy made for the Soldiers' and Sailors' Fair at Baltimore in 1864, with the title and date, as well as the autograph signature, was made several months later, and has often been facsimiled, being known as the standard version. George Bancroft's copy was of about the same date as this. The copy here given is in the possession of Mrs. John Hay, who is also the fortunate owner of the equally valuable manuscript of the Second Inaugural address. Through her gracious courtesy, these priceless historic relics are now first reproduced in facsimile.

*En passant*, the writer may perhaps be permitted to mention that he is the fortunate possessor of a precious memorial of the martyr-President and five other great heirs of fame, in a ring which contains the hair of Washington, Hamilton, Napoleon, Wellington, Lincoln and Grant. The first was received from Washington's adopted son, G. W. P. Custis of Arlington, Virginia; the second from Hamilton's widow, when she was ninety-six and he sixteen; the third from Captain Frederick Lahrbush of the Sixtieth Rifles, who guarded Napoleon at St. Helena, after being at Waterloo; Wellington's hair from his eldest son, the second Duke; and Grant's and Lincoln's from the Presidents themselves. When the author of this article asked Mr. Lincoln, on his last birthday, for a lock of



his hair to add to Washington's and Hamilton's, he said, "Help yourself, Colonel."

I was so fortunate as to be within a few yards of the President when he delivered, on the east portico of the National Capitol, on the morning of Saturday, March 4, 1865, the famous Second Inaugural Address, which is one of the gems of the English language. Clouds hung like a pall in the sky, as if portending trouble and disaster; but as the tall form of the President appeared on the crowded colonnade, he was greeted with hearty cheers from thousands of throats. Almost immediately sunshine fell upon him as he began to read, in a strong high-pitched voice, what he believed to be the best of all his oratorical efforts. After the vigorous applause which followed its conclusion, the oath of office was administered by Chief Justice Chase, and the memorable inauguration ceremonial came to a close. In this, no less than in the briefer address previously delivered on the greatest battle-field of the New World, Lincoln reached a height to which the nineteenth century afforded no equal. Writing to Thurlow Weed ten days after its delivery, he expressed his own opinion of the address. (See letter on page 523.)

Breakfasting with Mr. Gladstone at his house in Harley Street, one of several guests introduced the name of Mr. Lincoln, and all enjoyed a few anecdotes of him, related by the writer. The distinguished statesman admitted his great qualities, and said that the President's Second Inaugural Address was "unquestionably a most striking and sublime utterance, not surpassed by any delivered during the nineteenth century."

During the six years and more that I was acquainted with our great Civil War President, I never saw him smoke, or use tobacco in any form, and but a few times observed him drink a glass of wine. Desiring to be confirmed in my impression as to his abstemious habits, I wrote to his secretary and biographer, the late

John G. Nicolay, who replied (April 7, 1900):

You can truthfully assert that President Lincoln was always absolutely truthful in thought, word and inference, that he never smoked or was profane, and generally that he never drank. The only qualification that could possibly be made on this last point is that he did sometimes at his own table and especially at State dinners, sip a little wine; but even then in a perfunctory way, in complying with a social custom, and not as doing it from any desire or initiative or habit of his own. You are quite correct in your recollection that the President read his second inaugural address and that he used spectacles. Colonel Hay possesses the original manuscript, and I have the original Gettysburg address. The great reputation of Mr. Lincoln as a relator of amusing anecdotes during his lifetime has attracted to his name, like Sydney Smith's, numberless stories to which he could have made no claim.

A few weeks after the inauguration, in company with Mr. Arnold, M. C., the writer called at the White House, and Mrs. Lincoln brought out the beautiful Bible used by Chief Justice Chase on that occasion in administering the oath to the President. The 27th and 28th verses of the 5th chapter of Isaiah were marked as the verses which Lincoln's lips had touched in kissing the open book. She was of the opinion that the text admonished him to be on his guard, and not to relax his efforts. The Bible was a gift from the Chief Justice to Mrs. Lincoln.

About the end of March, I accompanied to the theatre the President, Mrs. Lincoln and the young lady who was with him when the assassin's bullet closed his career a fortnight later. He sat in the rear of the box leaning his head against the partition, paying no attention to the play and looking so worn and weary that it would not have been surprising had his soul and body separated that very night. When the curtain fell after the first act, turning to him, I said,



"Mr. President, you are not apparently interested in the play." "Oh, no, Colonel," he replied; "I have not come for the play, but for the rest. I am being hounded to death by office-seekers, who pursue me early and late, and it is simply to get two or three hours' relief that I am here." After a slight pause he added: "I wonder if we shall be tormented in heaven with them, as well as with bores and fools?" He then closed his eyes, and I turned to the ladies.

A few moments later I felt Mr. Lincoln's heavy hand on my shoulder. Turning, to my great surprise I saw him sitting upright, his eyes gleaming with fun. "Colonel," he said, "did I ever tell you the story of Grant at the circus?" "No, Mr. President, but I shall be delighted to hear it." "Well, when Grant was about ten years old, a circus came to Point Pleasant, Ohio, where the family lived, and the boy asked his father for a quarter to go to the circus. As the old tanner would not give him the necessary coin, he crawled in under the canvas tent, as I used to do; for in those days," said the President, "I never possessed a quarter of a dollar. There was a clever mule in that circus that had been trained to throw his rider, and when he appeared in the ring it was announced that any one in the audience that would ride him once around the ring without being thrown would win a silver dollar. There were many candidates for the coin, but all were thrown over the animal's head. Finally the ring-master ordered the mule taken out, when Master Ulysses presented himself saying, 'Hold on, I will try that beast.' The boy mounted the mule, holding on longer than any of the others, but at length, when about seven-eighths of the ring had been achieved amid the cheers of the audience, the boy was thrown. Springing to his feet and throwing off his cap and coat, Ulysses shouted in a determined tone, 'I would like to try that mule again,' and again the audience cheered him. This time he resorted to strategy. He faced

to the rear, seized hold of the beast's tail instead of his head, which rather demoralized the mule, and so the boy went around the ring, winning the silver dollar. And," added the President, "just so General Grant will hold on to Bob Lee." Ten days later General Lee surrendered his army at Appomattox Court House.

Before we separated that evening the President said: "If you will come in to-morrow afternoon before your departure, I will give you my last photograph that has just been taken by Brady." The following day I received it with his name written in full. He seemed to have a presentiment, for "Now, my dear Colonel," he said, "perhaps you will value this after I am gone."

It seems but yesterday, when, on this occasion, I looked for the last time on his homely and honest face, which I had known when it was free from care, but now beheld careworn and haggard, and felt his still strong hand encircling mine as he said, "Good-bye, Colonel, and a safe journey to New Orleans. *Au revoir!*" adding with a laugh, "I hope my French pronunciation is correct. If not, how is this for German?—*Auf wiedersehen!*"

A fortnight later, I was awakened early in the morning at my home on the Hudson, by the tolling of the church-bells. When I inquired why they were ringing, I learned that Mr. Lincoln had been assassinated. General Grant once said to me that the day the President died was the saddest of his life, and I think that, with a single exception, it was the saddest day of mine. A few days later, I listened to America's greatest preacher as, in Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, he gave voice to the universal grief.

At Lincoln's burial in Springfield, the capital of Illinois, on May 4, 1865, the Second Inaugural Address was read over his open grave—as the friends of Raphael selected the incomparable canvas of the Transfiguration as the principal feature of his funeral.





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# PUTNAM'S

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1909



# RECOLLECTIONS OF LINCOLN

By JAMES GRANT WILSON\*



Y the general judgment of the English-speaking world, Washington, Lincoln and Grant are accepted as the three greatest Americans:

Washington the founder, Lincoln the liberator, and Grant—who commanded the Union armies at the close of the Civil War—the saviour of our country. With the *Pater Patriæ* I enjoyed agreeable associations in early youth, through intimacies with several of those who were nearest and dearest to him; with the martyr President it was my privilege to have an acquaintance extending over seven years; and with the illustrious soldier, I was on terms of familiar friendship for almost a quarter of a century. While many persons have known both Lincoln and Grant, and a few, perhaps, were acquainted with both Washington and Lincoln, so far as I am aware there was but a single one who knew the triumvirate of uncrowned American kings. That person was the leader of the Philadelphia bar, Mr. Horace Binney, with whom I spent a memorable evening in the year 1874. On that occasion he told his guests that he had known Washington, his mother living in Market Street adjoining the President's residence; that he had seen the General almost daily for several years when he himself was a schoolboy, and was always recognized and frequently spoken to by Washington, who knew him as his friend Mrs. Binney's son. The venerable man also mentioned the interesting fact, that he had been acquaint-

ed with every President of the United States up to the time of General Grant, during whose second administration he passed away at the great age of ninety-five.

President Roosevelt has said of the great triumvirate among his twenty-four predecessors:

Washington fought in the earlier struggle and it was his good fortune to win the highest renown alike as a soldier and statesman. In the second and even greater struggle, the deeds of Lincoln the statesman were made good by those of Grant the soldier; and later Grant himself took up the work that dropped from Lincoln's tired hands when the assassin's bullet went home, and the sad, patient, kindly eyes were closed forever.

It would be a curious question to inquire what would have been the history of our country without the services of these three mighty men. It may be doubted if independence could have been achieved without Washington, and it is equally open to doubt whether the integrity of the Republic would have been maintained without Lincoln and Grant. National unity is no longer a theory, but a condition; we are now united in fact as well as in name. It is not the least glory of these three illustrious men that they were spotless in all the varied relations of private life. Their countrymen will continue to cherish their memory in ages that we shall not see, and upon the adamant of their fame the stream of time shall beat unavailingly.

No year during the nineteenth century witnessed the birth of so many men and women of genius as

\* See page 723; also, PUTNAM'S MAGAZINE for February, page 515



the *annus mirabilis* 1809, in which were born Gladstone, Tennyson and his friend Fitzgerald, Darwin, Chopin, Mendelssohn, Poe, Holmes and his classmate Robert C. Winthrop, the Christian statesman and orator, and—most illustrious of all—Abraham Lincoln, sixteenth president of the United States, who first saw the light on the day of Darwin's birth.

It has ever since been a source of regret that I omitted at the time to jot down some of the delightful sayings and amusing anecdotes related by Lincoln in Leonard Volk's studio in Chicago in mid-April in 1860. A single Southern story is, after almost half a century, the only one I can recall, and I cannot remember what led Mr. Lincoln to relate the incident, for

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT LINCOLN ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT OF NOTIFICATION OF HIS  
SECOND NOMINATION

### Executive Mansion.

Washington June 27 1864

Now William Demmons & others, a Committee of the National Union Convention

Gentlemen:

Your letter of the 14<sup>th</sup> Inst. formally notifying me that I have been nominated by the convention you represent for the Presidency of the United States for four years from the fourth of March next has been received.

The nomination is gratefully accepted, as the resolutions of the convention, calling the platform, are heartily approved.

While the resolution in regard to the supplanting of republican government upon the Western Continent is fully concurred in, <sup>there</sup> ~~might~~ <sup>be</sup> ~~misunderstanding~~ were I not to ~~say~~ that the position of the government, in relation to the action of France in Mexico, as assumed through the State Department, and approved and indorsed by the Convention, among the measures and acts of the Executive, will be faithfully maintained, so long as the state of facts shall leave that position pertinent and applicable.

I am especially gratified that the policies and the

seaman were not forgotten by the Convention, as they  
forever must and will be remembered by the  
grateful country for whose salvation they devote  
their lives—

Thanking you for the kind and complimentary  
terms in which you have communicated the reso-  
lution and other proceedings of the Convention,  
I subscribe myself  
Yours Obedt Servt  
Abraham Lincoln.

he rarely told a story without a purpose. A balloon ascension occurred in New Orleans "befo' de' wa'," and after sailing in the air several hours, the aeronaut, who was arrayed in silks and spangles like a circus performer, descended in a cotton field, where a gang of slaves were at work. The frightened negroes took to the woods—all but one venerable darkey, who was rheumatic and could not run, and who, as the resplendent aeronaut approached, having apparently just dropped from heaven, said: "Good mawning, Massa Jesus; how 's your Pa?"

In the summer of 1856, I spent a delightful day with Burns's youngest sister Isabella, said to have resembled him more than any member of the family, of which she was the last survivor. She was past fourscore, and expressed the opinion that nothing had been written about her gifted brother equal to Halleck's lines. From her garden on the banks of Bonnie Doon she picked a rosebud for me to convey to the American poet. Four years later I presented a copy of Halleck's poems to Mr. Lincoln, and he acknowledged the gift in the following letter:

Springfield, May 2, 1860.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

I am greatly obliged for the volume of your friend Fitz-Greene Halleck's poems.

Many a month has passed since I have met with anything more admirable than his beautiful lines on Burns. With Alnwick Castle, Marco Bozzaris, and Red Jacket, I am also much pleased. It is wonderful that you should have seen and known a sister of Robert Burns. You must tell me something about her when we meet again.

Yours very truly,

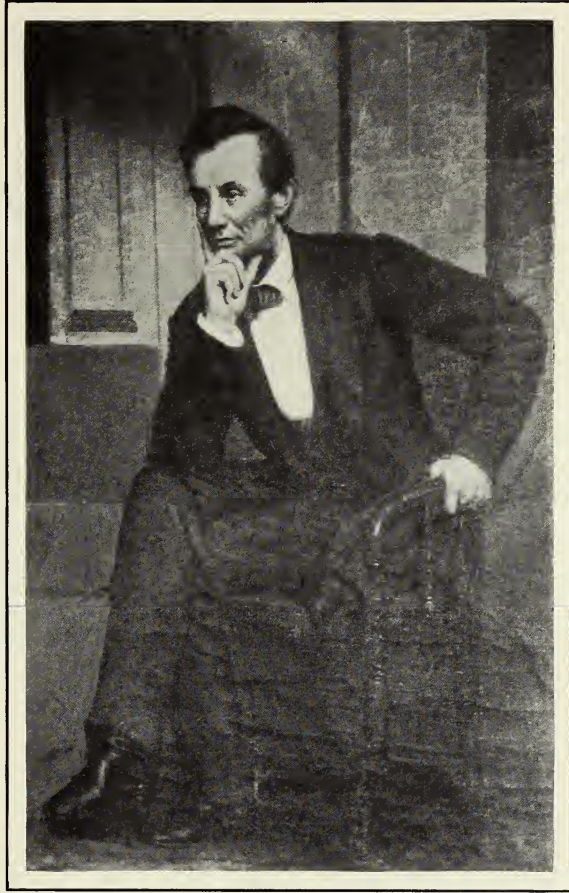
A. LINCOLN.

On Lincoln's 56th birthday (February 12, 1865), the writer's brother-in-law, James Dixon of Connecticut, who represented that State in the United States Senate from 1857 to 1869, always supporting the President's policies, invited me to meet a tall New Englander at luncheon, and later to accompany them to the White House, as he wished to introduce him to Mr. Lincoln, who was invariably interested in persons taller than himself. When the President saw the giant, lacking but two inches of seven feet, he was speechless with astonishment. As he surveyed him several times from head to foot, the well-known smile spread over his homely face, and his sad eyes sparkled with fun, as he said: "My friend, will you kindly permit me to inquire if you know when your feet get cold?"

Another evening, this month, the President related an incident that had occurred at Decatur when the Illinois Republicans named him as their choice

for the Presidency. An old Democrat from "Egypt," as southern Illinois was called, approached Mr. Lincoln and said, "So you're Abe Lincoln." "Yes, that is my name." "They say you're a self-made man." "Well, yes; what there is of me is self-made." "Well, all I've got to say," observed the old man, after a careful survey of the Republican candidate, "is that it was a damn bad job."

I find in my diary, under date of Wednesday, March 15th, 1865, the following entries: "Enjoyed a delightful afternoon drive with Mrs. S. A. Douglas. In the evening, at Grover's Theatre with the President, Mrs. Lincoln and Miss Harris, listening to the opera of 'The Magic Flute' and occupying a comfortable box. The President, alluding to the large feet of one of the leading female singers, which were also very flat, remarked, 'The beetles would n't have much of a chance there!' When asked by Mrs. Lincoln to go before the last act of the opera was concluded, he said: 'Oh, no, I want to see it out. It's best when you undertake a job, to finish it.' Among several 'good things,' the President told of a Southern Illinois preacher who, in the course of his sermon, asserted that the Saviour was the only perfect man who had ever appeared in this world; also, that there was no record in the Bible, or elsewhere, of any perfect woman having lived on the earth. Whereupon there arose in the rear of the church a persecuted-looking personage who, the parson having stopped speaking, said: 'I know a perfect woman, and I've heard of her about every day



From G. P. A. Healy's painting "The Peacemakers"

*Abraham Lincoln*

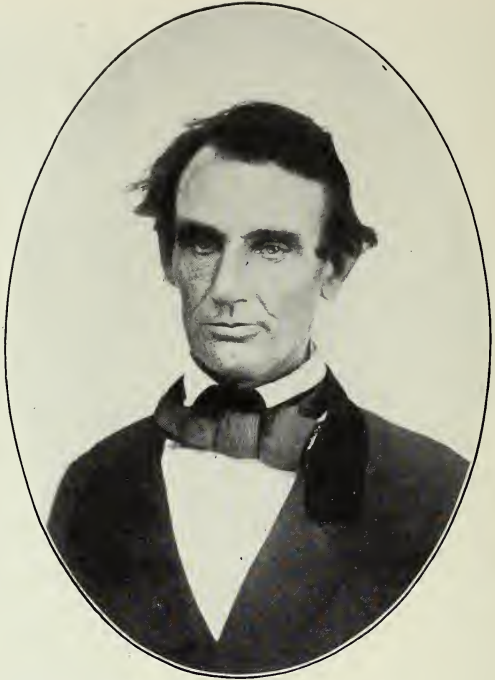
for the last six years.' 'Who was she?' asked the minister. 'My husband's first wife,' replied the afflicted female."

A few evenings later, my diary mentions, the President at the White House read to three intimate friends, with much power and pathos, Halleck's "Alnwick Castle" and "Marco Bozzaris." It may be added that the closing lines of this splendid American lyric have been deemed prophetic of the President's own career and fate:

For thou art Freedom's now, and Fame's—  
One of the few, the immortal names,  
That were not born to die.



Owing to Lincoln's great reputation as a *raconteur*, many stories and sayings were attributed to him for which he was in no way responsible. A single illustration of these fraudulent anecdotes will suffice. It was revived and widely reprinted by the papers throughout the country, recently, owing to the death of the Duke of Devonshire, who, when visiting the United States as the Marquis of Hartington, was said to have been the subject of one of Mr. Lincoln's happy strokes of humor. Like a majority of his class, the young Cavendish was an ardent sympathizer with the South, and at a public ball wore a secession badge in his button-hole. The newspapers made much of the incident, and it was said that Mr. Lincoln, not wishing to magnify it by refusing to receive the offender, who had expressed a desire to call at the



Ambrotype taken at Pittsfield, Illinois

LINCOLN IN 1858



From a photograph by Brady, 1865, presented by Lincoln to the author

*Abraham Lincoln*

White House, yet not caring, on the other hand, to appear to condone it, by receiving him, consented to his coming, but quietly ignored his identity, when he was presented, by addressing him as "Mr. Partington."

What actually occurred was that the Marquis of Hartington, accompanied by the Marquis of Lorne (now the Duke of Argyll), brought letters of introduction to the Secretary of State, by whom they were presented to the President, with whom they enjoyed an agreeable interview, without any Confederate badge or "Mr. Partington" incident. The authority for this statement is Secretary Seward's son, who was present. Even Lowell accepted the current canard, for in his famous essay, "On a Certain Condensation in Foreigners," he writes:

One of Mr. Lincoln's neatest strokes of humor was his treatment of this gen-



tleman [Lord Hartington] when a laudable curiosity induced him to be presented to the President of the Broken Bubble. Mr. Lincoln persisted in calling him Mr. Partington. Surely the refinement of good breeding could go no farther. Giving the young man his real name (already notorious in the newspapers) would have made his visit an insult. Had Henri IV done this, it would have been famous.

Some accounts had it that Lord Hartington had actually worn the badge at the White House. As a matter of fact, a young lady had pinned the emblem on his breast at a ball in Baltimore, and the young man had refused to take it off when his attention was called to its significance.

In presenting the author of this article with a photograph of Healy's painting of "The Peacemakers," General Sherman said, "I think the likeness of Mr. Lincoln is by far the best I have seen."

In allusion to the Brady photograph, Mr. Nicolay wrote to me in 1897: "I am not able to tell you when the photograph of Mr. Lincoln was taken, but during the late war period Alexander Gardner was Brady's photographer (and an excellent artist) and I think took all the pictures that were taken of the President. The family group is a made-up affair, formed of the Lincoln and Tad picture given in Vol.

VIII of our Life,\* while the other two figures appear to have been added from drawings."

Gladstone once remarked of Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address (first reproduced in facsimile in this magazine, last month):

"I am taken captive by so striking an utterance as this. I see in it the effect of sharp trial when rightly borne to raise men to a higher level of thought and feeling. It is by cruel suffering that nations are sometimes born to a better life: so it is with individual men. Mr. Lincoln's words show that upon him anxiety and sorrow had wrought their true effect. The address gives evidence of a moral elevation most rare in a statesman, or indeed in any man."

In his celebrated Commemoration Ode of June, 1865, honoring Harvard's young heroes who gave their lives in defence of their country's flag, Lowell devotes some sixty lines to Lincoln—

New birth of our new soil—the first American.

\* \* \* \* \*

Here was a type of the true elder race,  
And one of Plutarch's men talked with  
us face to face.

This portion of the Ode, copied by the poet, may be seen framed with a Lincoln portrait in the library of Williams College, Williamstown, Mass.†

\* Nicolay and Hay's "Abraham Lincoln."

Such was he, our nation's chief,  
Whom late the Nation he had led,  
With 'neath his head,  
Kept with the passion of an angry grief:  
Nature, they say, took note  
And cannot make a man  
Set on some worn-out plan,  
Repeating things by rote;  
His heart his (old world) mouth made, he threw,  
And, throwing, drew them from the breast  
Of the unshaped heart,  
With sharp, unshaped shape, a heart sent,  
Nothing of shape here,  
Or, then, of shape finding inward shape,  
For any name of shape is lost

It was a type of the true elder race,  
And one of Plutarch's men talked with  
us face to face.  
Great captains, with their fins & drums,  
Disturb me judgment for the heart,  
But at last silence comes;  
These all are gone, & standing like a tower,  
One children shall hold his fame,  
The kindly, earnest, brave, forgiving man,  
Sagacious, patient, breathing power, not blame,  
New birth of our new soil, the first American.

Lowell

5th Dec. 1890.

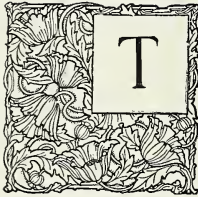
† FACSIMILE OF A COPY IN LOWELL'S HANDWRITING OF THE PASSAGE REFERRING TO LINCOLN IN THE COMMEMORATION ODE READ AT HARVARD IN JUNE, 1865



Designed by J. E. Roiné      Copyright, 1908, by Robert Hewitt  
FROM "THE LINCOLN CENTENNIAL MEDAL" (1908)  
(OBVERSE)

## A MEDALLIC HISTORY OF LINCOLN

By MONTGOMERY SCHUYLER



THE sentiment of Lowell's "Commemoration Ode" was by no means the universal—nor even the prevailing—sentiment of the American people when the ode was first "recited, at the Harvard Commemoration, July 21st, 1865." Its eulogy of Lincoln was then not a national, but an individual, confession of faith. The eulogist months before, in prose, in the *North American Review*, had expressed the sentiments of the poem, and thereby vindicated his own political sense and insight, and even foresight—like Burke's, of whom Fox said that he was "wise too soon." Up to the time when Booth's bullet sped to its mark, Lincoln was the storm-centre of a fierce political convulsion. His re-election was indeed recognized as a political necessity for the success of the war and the

restoration of the Union. But that he was the indispensable Moses to lead the American people to the Promised Land, there were few Americans indeed who perceived up to the day the nation lost him. He was almost even more obnoxious to the Radicals of his own party, from Garrison to Greeley, and including such formidable critics as "Ben" Wade and Henry Winter Davis in Congress, than to the "Copperheads" themselves, who sympathized with the Secession and desired the establishment of the Confederacy. For to these Radicals the end and aim of the Civil War was the destruction of slavery, whereas Lincoln never concealed his willingness, and indeed his anxiety, to restore the Union with slavery left alone. "The Union as it was and the Constitution as it is," a common watchword in those days, was his motto. Throughout the struggle, he can hardly be said to have been a popular President. At no time was



his popularity at all to be compared with that which Mr. Roosevelt, for instance, has enjoyed.

It seems not amiss to remind the younger generation of these facts which their elders know so well. The *New York World*, itself distinctly in opposition during the war, though of the "War Democrats," and one of the most weighty organs of American opinion, published an article on the morrow of the assassination, from the pen of Ivory Chamberlain, who did very much to give the journal its weight, pointing out that the martyred man had in truth been a national necessity, for the reason that he had moved just so far and fast and no farther or faster than the mass of the people would go with him; pointing out how if he had issued the Emancipation Proclamation much earlier than he did, on the one hand, or delayed it much longer on the other, he would have failed of the popular backing which was indispensable to the national cause. Here also was another example of early wisdom. But the belief now prevailing, and to the currency of which the "Commemoration Ode" has much contributed, that Lincoln was recognized while he was doing his work as the national hero he is acclaimed now that his work has so long been triumphantly done is quite unfounded. Quite contrariwise. "We did not account him a god, like Odin, while he dwelt among us," as Carlyle has it about Shakespeare. And the canonization which now finds no *advocatus diaboli* to oppose it, was long in

coming, though it has long been complete here at home. Not so abroad. Those famous verses of Tom Taylor's, in which *Punch* recanted its abuse of Lincoln, were themselves of a perfunctory kind. And, twenty years later, one is astonished, in Matthew Arnold's letters, to find that, on the strength of the "Memoirs," that scholar "much prefers" Grant to Lincoln. But how possibly could the "last of the English" appreciate "the first American"? Not so much blame to Mr. Arnold, when we remember the atmosphere of detraction in which Lincoln lived and died—those of us who are old enough to remember it at all; even those who, like the present commentator, never saw the face of Lincoln until they trudged or shuffled past his coffin as units of the dusky procession that for those uncounted hours passed the exposed dead face in the dim-lit rotunda of the New York City Hall. As to many of them, that was their penance and recantation.

Four years before, when Lincoln had "come out of the West" as an uncouth Lochinvar, these penitents had sneered at his "steel watch chain" and his uncouth Western

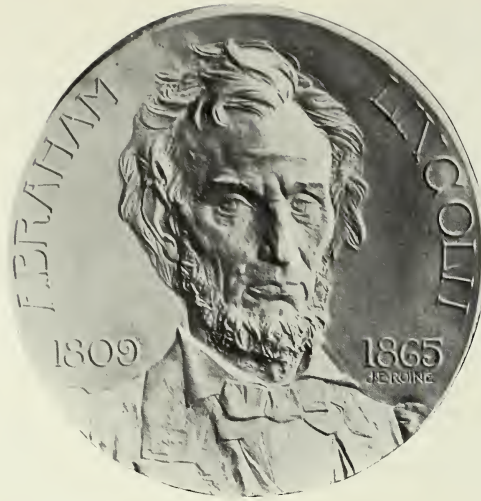
ways, and asked, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" For, be it always remembered, Lincoln's candidacy for the Presidency, if not quite a casual candidacy, like that of Mr. Bryan in a Chicago convention thirty-six years later, was a sectional candidacy of the West, and in its inception a local candi-



Designed by J. E. Roine

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FROM "THE LINCOLN CENTENNIAL MEDAL" (1908)  
(REVERSE)



Designed by J. E. Roine

FROM "THE LINCOLN TRIBUTE BOOK" (1909)  
(OBVERSE)

dacy of Illinois. In that earlier Chicago convention, when it met, the pro-Lincoln element was small. The division was into Seward and anti-Seward. For Seward was by common consent the leader of the Republican party, the man who had confined and guided the growing sentiment against the extension of slavery within and upon political and lawyer-like lines. And yet, four years and a half later, there was not one of these waiting millions assembled to see the corpse of Lincoln carried back from Washington to Springfield, who was not inwardly, even if inarticulately, aware that the country had had a great escape—that no Pharisee could have done the great work as it had been done by this Nazarene. When he was nominated, it is hardly too much to say that Lincoln was "The Great American Joke." Neither was this depreciating feeling dispelled by the local reputation that he had made in Illinois by encountering in debate on equal terms the most expert and formidable of the Senatorial gladiators of that time, the "Little Giant" whom he used to describe as "Judge Douglass," nor yet by the great "Cooper Union Speech"

of February, 1860, which he had been induced to come East expressly to make, and thereby to pose himself in the Eastern mind as a Presidential availability—successful as the speech was for its immediate audience, and diligently as it was worked by the Eastern publicists and politicians who, for good or bad reasons, hated Seward as a lawyer, as an over-cautious politician, in short, as a Laodicean. Lincoln himself was far from sharing the confidence of the Lincoln propagandists that he was the "anything to beat Seward." And, during his whole Presidency, his personal demeanor was such as to alienate the respectable and "cultured" classes. As when a delegation of important business men of New York called at the White House to entreat him to take notice of certain calumnies against the Administration, and were answered by the counter-query of the heavy-laden, melancholy man to the very important chairman of the delegation, "Mr. —, did you ever try to shovel fleas?" And as in those Rabelaisian apologues which he was wont to deliver, and in those "West-country stories" which "Bull Run" Russell attests that he told so well. A singular President of the United States, as he himself said. But that he should have emerged out of all that to become the second, and hardly second, on our list of national heroes, that the canonization should have been so tranquilly and so completely accomplished, this is what one may call the formation of the Lincolnian myth.

How is all this to be made clear to the younger generation, and to "posterity" in general, which is so clear to the elder, in so far as it may not have been overlaid by the mists of memory? There is the method adopted in respect of this very subject and period, by the pious industry of Mr. James Ford Rhodes, who, *incredibili labore*, has rummaged the files of old newspapers and all man-

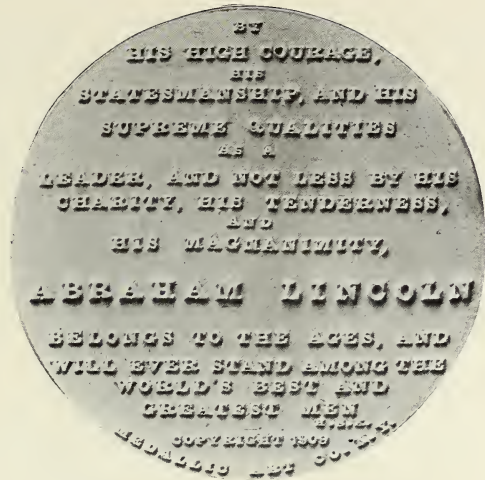


ner of contemporary unofficial documents, to recover what everybody knew then and nobody knows now. But this is not the only method. Epigraphy is a science which, when devoted to a remote antiquity, has its professors and eager students. Why not when devoted to the things of the past generation which already to the present are

old, unhappy, far-off things,  
And battles long ago?

And when one finds a man who had the happy thought, while Lincoln was still alive or newly dead, of collecting and preserving Lincolniana in medals, then easily attainable but now quite irrecoverable, one is moved to the same gratitude which Bolingbroke relates to have inspired that "studious man of Christ-church," who was "overheard in his oratory acknowledging the divine goodness in furnishing the world with makers of dictionaries." Such a man is Mr. Robert Hewitt, of Ardsley on the Hudson, who, many years ago, and while he was serving his mercantile apprenticeship, took the not uncommon fancy of collecting odd coins. It was upon the occasion of his asking his neighbor George Bancroft, the historian, the origin of some coin unknown to him, that he received the excellent advice, beneficial now to all the rest of us, to specialize in his collecting, and addicted himself accordingly to current history—history in the making. The result is a collection of medallie Lincolniana probably unequalled in number and extent.

It is to be borne in mind, of course, that photography was still in its infancy in 1860, the commonest mode of solar portraiture at that time being the "ambrotype," successor to the daguerreotype. The "snap-shot" was far in the future, and equally the now prevailing "campaign badge" or button, with a photograph of the candidate of one's choice. The substitute was the metallic and medallie "token" struck from dies—a mode



Designed by J. E. Roine

FROM "THE LINCOLN TRIBUTE BOOK" (1909)  
(REVERSE)

of commemoration as old as history but far more commonly employed in Lincoln's day than at any previous time in our annals. While Washington's career may be said to have lasted for a full generation, that of Lincoln as a national figure was comprised within the five years from his nomination to his assassination. And yet there are but very few Washington medals of Washington's time known to numismatists, while of pieces relating to Lincoln more than eight hundred varieties are recorded and catalogued.

And what a recall of old times it is to look over Mr. Hewitt's collection! The very first is probably that which was most familiar to the "Wide-Awakes" who composed the Republican torchlight processions of 1860, just as the "Little Giants" were their Democratic rivals, each side clad in cheap and showy oilcloth capes to protect their clothing from the drip of the very crude oil that fed their fuliginous torches, so-called. And this is noticeable at once, nowadays, by the beardlessness of the face. In fact, Lincoln's beard was coeval with his Presidency. It was reported and believed at the time that he had let his beard grow while yet he tarried at Springfield, in deference

to the advice of one of his admirers' a little girl who had written him that he would look better bearded. At any rate, he arrived in Washington with a growth of stubble which, in connection with his shaven upper lip, rather enhanced that rustic and provincial aspect which his antagonists derided. The advice was in fact bad, for there was more character in the shaven face than in that fringed with beard. The first piece struck in the campaign of 1860 was the token with the inscription, "Millions for Freedom, not one cent for Slavery"—a pointless parody, of course, on the very pointed Revolutionary watchword of "Millions for Defence, but not one cent for Tribute."

The medal catalogued in Mr. Hewitt's collection as No. 155 is obviously also a campaign "token" or badge, and is notable as perpetuating the long-forgotten campaign cry of "The Rail-Splitter of the West." That was one of the proclamations of an humble origin which was the badge of Democracy rather than of Republicanism in those days, the Republican party being mainly recruited from the Whigs, who believed in having their candidates, like St. Patrick, "come of dacent people." Henry J. Raymond, in the *New York Times*, was solicitous to point out that rail-splitting was not statemanship, and that it was the misfortune of the candidate, and not a recommendation, that he had been engaged

in that occupation. But of course that line of argument did not eradicate the tendency to abase the origin of a candidate that he might be exalted—a tendency of which I noted an extreme example the other

day in a "scare head" over a biographical sketch of Mr. Elihu Root, "From College Boy to Leading Lawyer," which probably sounds the extreme depth of this particular variety of bathos.

No. 192 (with its inscription, "Made from Cop-

per taken from the Ruins of the Turpentine Works, Newbern, N. C., Destroyed by the Rebels March 14, 1862") belongs not only to the Presidential period, but to the darkest days of the war, when the Peninsular campaign was not yet begun, and when a little raid like this into North Carolina, compelling the "Rebels" to burn some turpentine works, was a success worth chronicling in perennial copper.

The gold medal, No. 4, has a curious extrinsic interest. It was the piece struck by the proceeds of a subscription raised in France and limited to two sous for each subscriber, to convey the sympathy of the French people to the widow of the martyred American President. The curious interest is that Louis Napoleon, having his eye on Mexico and far from foreseeing

the day when Bazaine would be ordered out of Mexico from Washington, and Sheridan arrayed with 75,000 veterans along the Rio Grande to enforce the order, should have



THE CAMPAIGN OF 1860 PIECE. THIS WAS ONE OF THE FIRST ISSUED AND WAS WIDELY CIRCULATED



THE FIRST COMMEMORATIVE TOKEN OF THE CIVIL WAR, EXCEEDINGLY SCARCE, FROM THE FACT THAT IT WAS MADE FROM COPPER CAPTURED DURING AN EARLY RAID



forbidden the minting of the piece in France. One notes with pain that the original is "announced for sale."

But all the medals are well worth looking over, though most of them on historical considerations. How they bring back old times, and what tales hang by them! By the mere inscription "Honest Old Abe," for exam-

ple; which recalls John Van Buren's speech in New York at the anti-Lincoln meeting presided over by Fernando Wood, Mayor of New York. "Honest Old Abe!" exclaimed the "Prince," with the familiar twinkle in his eye which denoted that a "good thing" was coming. "And have we come to this, that a man is to be supported for President with no other claim than that of ordinary honesty? It is an insult to us. It is almost an insult to him. Why, here is our worthy Mayor. Did any one ever insult *him* thus? Did anybody ever call *him* 'Honest Old Fernando'?" It is needless to add that the house was "brought down." And, along with the motto, of Horace Greeley's authorship, "Freedom National, Slavery Sectional," one comes upon the motto, "We will not interfere with the Constitutional Rights of Any State," a distinction between restriction and abolition, and a disclaimer of any intention to put down slavery where it already existed, that, undoubtedly, for the first two years of the war, was the policy of Lincoln and the Lincoln Republicans. It would have done some recent historians no harm to bear this in mind.

Naturally, the interest of the collection, as already intimated, is al-

most exclusively historical, and only in a minor way artistic. In contrast is the Lincoln Centennial Medal,\* undertaken at the instigation of Mr. Hewitt himself, in a volume containing the most memorable of Lincoln's written and spoken words. This has the pretension to attain the highest grade of the medallic art of the young twentieth century, with what

success readers can judge for themselves. At all events, the fact that the Metropolitan Museum of Art has accepted the gift of the original design of it, indicates that in the judgment of accomplished critics the work is of high artistic quality. The medal in question was struck in



A MEMORIAL TOKEN MADE AT THE TIME  
WHEN LINCOLN'S BODY WAS BORNE  
THROUGH THE VARIOUS STATES  
TO ITS FINAL RESTING-  
PLACE

bronze; in silver, limited to one hundred examples—this edition is exhausted and now selling at double its original price; and in gold—a single medal, which went to Major William H. Lambert of Philadelphia, widely known for his great collection of Lincolniana. This, alike in its bronze, silver and gold editions, is presented, too, in a most original form, which is the result of the art of both the medallist and the book-maker; it is set in a heavy board leaf, and bound into a volume entitled "The Lincoln Centennial Medal." This binding of the commemoration medals, detachable from their setting, in the midst of text, itself commemorative, is a fitting way of presenting and preserving works of the kind.

One may, perhaps, be allowed to express the hope that the unique interest of this collection, which has for so nearly half a century been in the making, may protect it permanently from dispersal.

\* See pages 676 and 677.



